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S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 GENEVA 3471

EXDIS

FROM MEPC DEL

EO 11652 GDS

TAGS PFOR

SUBJ MEETING OF MILITARY WORKING GROUP ON

SYRIAN-ISRAELI DISENGAGEMENT JUNE 1

1. SUMMARY. MILITARY WORKING GROUP GOT OFF TO SLOW AND SOMEWHAT STRAINED START IN ONE AND ONE-HALF HOUR SESSION SATURDAY AFTERNOON, ALTHOUGH ATMOSPHERE LOOSENED UP SOMEWHAT TOWARDS END WITH SYRIAN REPRESENTATIVE OCCASIONALLY FORGETTING TO TALK THROUGH GENERAL SIILASVUO AND RESPONDING DIRECTLY TO ISRAELIS ACROSS TABLE. ISRAELIS CAME WELL ORGANIZED WITH PROPOSALS FOR GENERAL TIME-TABLE FOR COMPLETING WORK OF WORKING GROUP ON JUNE 5, RECOVERING WRECKED VEHICLES FROM NO MAN'S LAND JUNE 3-5 (SHAFIR EXPLAINED ONE PURPOSE WAS TO RECOVER REMAINS OF ISRAELI SOLDIERS FROM VEHICLES), AND EXCHANGING DEAD BODIES JUNE 5. ISRAELIS ALSO TABLED MAP AND DETAILED TIMETABLE FOR PHASED DISENGAGEMENT, SPECIFYING DATES FOR EVACUATING ZONE BY ZONE, TURNING OVER TO UNDOF FOR SUBSEQUENT TURNOVER T SYRIAN MILITARY AND/OR CIVILIAN ADMINISTRATION. SYRIAN DELEGATION ASKED TO STUDY MAP AND DETAILED TIMETABLE OVERNIGHT, AND IT WAS NOT DISCUSSED DURING MEETING. ON OTHER ISRAELI PROPOSALS, WHILE GENERAL TIME-

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TABLE WAS ACCEPTED IN PRINCIPLE, SYRIANS ONLY SAID THEY WOULD

PROVIDE REPLIES NEXT DAY AND WERE GENERALLY RESERVED OR NEGATIVE IN THEIR REACTION. SYRIAN CHIEF DEL GAVE IMPRESSION OF BEING UNSURE OF HIMSELF, UNDER TIGHT INSTRUCTIONS, AND NOT PARTICULARLY WELL ORGANIZED. ADDITIONAL PROBLEM IS THAT MEETING CONDUCTED IN ENGLISH, AND SYRIAN DEL HAS DIFFICULTY IN BOTH EXPRESSING HIMSELF AND IN COMPREHENSION, NECESSITATING NUMBER OF REPETITIONS AS WELL AS CONSULTATIONS WITH EGYPTIAN GENERAL MAGHDOUB AND AMBASSADOR TARAASI. NEITHER SOVIET COLONELS NOR U.S. REPRESENTATIVES SPOKE DURING MEETING. SIILASVUO HANDLED MEETING WITH EFFICIENT AND FIRM HAND AND OCCASIONAL GOOD HUMOR, TAKING INITIATIVE AT SEVERAL POINTS TO ATTEMPT TO FORMULATE POINTS OF AGREEMENT OR DISAGREEMENT AND TO KEEP MATTERS MOVING IN POSITIVE WAY. OUTSTANDING AT END OF MEETING WAS DISCREPANCY OF FIVE CLAIMED BY SYRIANS IN TOTAL POWS HELD BY ISRAEL. ISRAELIS UNDERTOOK TO LOOK INTO CASES OF THOSE FIVE ON BASIS OF NAMES PROVIDED BY SYRIANS, AND TRY TO GIVE REPLY BY NEXT DAY SO THAT PARTIES MIGHT AGREE ON POW EXCHANGE DETAILS. SIILASVUO ALSO OBTAINED FROM BOTH PARTIES AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE TO UNDO BEGINNING MOVEMENT (BY AIR AND ROAD) TO VICINITY OF GOLAN HEIGHTS SO AS TO BE READY BY JUNE 6; HE PROMISED DETAILED TIMETABLE AFTER TALKING WITH WALDHEIM TOMORROW. AT END OF MEETING IT WAS AGREED THT UN WOULD LIMIT COMMENTS TO PRESS TO SAYING WORKING GROUP HAD DISCUSSED NUMBER OF SUBJECTS RELATED TO SEPARATION OF FORCES, WOULD BE DISCUSSING FURTHER DETAILS LATER, AND WOULD MEET SUNDAY MORNING AT 10:30. END SUMMARY.

2. AFTER WELCMING THE PARTICIPANTS, GENERAL SIILASVUO REVIEWED THE AGENDA AS AGREED TO AT THE PREVIOUS MEETING, MARCH 31. FIRST WOULD BE A GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE DISENGAGEMENT PROCESS FOLLOWED BY DISCUSSION OF POWS, RETURN OF DEAD BODIES, AND RETRIEVAL OF WRECKED VEHICLES FROM NO-MAN'S-LAND. HE ASKED FOR THE PARTIES' SUGGESTIONS.

3. ON BEHALF OF ISRAEL, GENERAL SHAFIR PRESENTED A SERIES OF PROPOSALS ON EACH TOPIC. THE SYRIAN SIDE AGREED TO PROCEED WITH DISCUSSION OF THE ISRAELI PROPOSALS. GEN SIILASVUO READ THEM OUT FROM FILES PROVIDED HIM BY ISRAEL. A COPY WAS ALSO PROVIDED THE SYRIAN SIDE.

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4. ISRAEL PROPOSED OVERALL TIMETABLE AS FOLLOWS:
(A) SIGNING OF CEASEFIRE MAY 31, WHICH HAS ALREADY TAKEN PLACE;
(B) REPATRIATION OF WOUNDED PRISONERS JUNE 1, WHICH HAS ALREADY TAKEN PLACE;
(C) MEETING OF WORKING GROUP JUNE 1 TO JUNE 5 INCLUSIVE;
(D) ALL REMAINING POWS TO BE REPATRIATED MORNING

OF JUNE 6 IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE AGREEMENT;
(E) IMPLEMENTATION OF DISENGAGEMENT TO BEGIN JUNE 6
IN ACCORDANCE WITH AGREEMENT;
(F) COMPLETION OF FORCES' WITHDRAWAL BY WEDNESDAY,
JUNE 26, 20 DAYS LATER.

5. THIS TIMETABLE WAS AGREED TO BY BRIG GEN TAYYARA FOR
SYRIA (COMMENT:SUBJECT, HOWEVER, TO WORK OF THE GROUP
BEING FINISHED BY JUNE 5, AS AGREEMENT PROVIDES, WHICH
RESERVATION SYRIAN SIDE LATER BROUGHT UP.).

6. SIILASVUO THEN MOVED DISCUSSION TO ISRAELI TIMETABLE
FOR PHASED DISENGAGEMENT. SYRIAN DELEGATION SAID IT WISHED TO
STUDY THE PLAN OVERNIGHT, TOGETHER WITH ACCOMPANYING MAP PROVIDED
BY ISRAELI DELEGATION. IT WAS AGREED NEXT MEETING WOULD BE
JUNE 2 STARTING AT 10:30 A.M.

7. SIILASVUO MOVED TO ISRAELI PLAN FOR DATES AND METHODS
OF EXCHANGING POWS. SYRIAN DELEGATION FOUND A DISCREPANCY
BETWEEN ITS OWN FIGURE OF 413 POWS HELD BY
ISRAEL AND ISRAELI FIGURE OF ONLY 408. THIS DISCREPANCY
REMAINS EVEN AFTER REMOVING WOUNDED PRISONERS WHO WERE
RETURNED JUNE 1. ISRAELI SIDE AGREED TO LOOK INTO THE
PROBLEM OF THE FIVE MISSING PRISONERS. IT POINTED OUT
ISRAELI FIGURE IS BASED ON ICRC AGREED NUMBER. SYRIAN
SIDE SAID ONE OF THE PRISONERS IS AN EGYPTIAN SEEN IN
ISRAEL. LETTERS FROM THREE OTHERS HAVE BEEN RECEIVED
IN SYRIA. ON SHAFIR'S REQUEST, NAMES OF THE FIVE WERE
PROVIDED, THOUGH SYRIANS DID NOT HAVE THEIR MILITARY
NUMBERS. ISRAELIS UNDERTOOK TO TRY TO GET CLARIFICATION
OF THE STATUS OF THESE FIVE, OR SOME EXPLANATION OF THE
DISCREPANCY, BY THE NEXT MORNING IF POSSIBLE. THEY
POINTED OUT MILITARY NUMBERS WOULD HAVE HELPED.

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8. SYRIAN SIDE SAID NAMES OF THE FIVE HAVE BEEN SENT TO ICRC REP IN DAMASCUS, THOUGH NO REPLY RECEIVED FROM HIM. HOWEVER, TAYYARA SAID ICRC REP "KNEW ABOUT THEM." SYRIAN SIDE WITHHELD AGREEMENT TO ISRAELI PROPOSAL FOR PRISONER EXCHANGE UNTIL PROBLEM OF THESE FIVE HAS BEEN CLEARED UP.

9. SIILASVUO MOVED DISCUSSION TO ISRAELI PROPOSAL FOR REPATRIATION OF DEAD SOLDIERS' BODIES. ISRAEL SUGGESTS EXCHANGE OF 309 IDENTIFIED SYRIAN SOLDIER BODIES FROM GOLAN HEIGHTS AGAINST 21 ISRAELI SOLDIERS BODIES ON JUNE 5, EXCHANGE TO TAKE PLACE ON MAIN QUNEITRA-DAMASCUS ROAD. SYRIAN SIDE QUESTIONED THE NEED FOR EXCHANGE OF BODIES PRIOR TO SEPARATION OF FORCES. ISRAELI SIDE SAID IT MADE SENSE TO DO IT ON JUNE 5 BEFORE ROADS GET CLOGGED UP WITH TRAFFIC AS FORCES BEGIN DISENGAGEMENT ON JUNE 6. TAYYARA SAID HE WOULD REPLY ON QUESTION OF THE DATE TOMORROW.

10. TAYYARA NOTED THAT SYRIANS ONLY HAVE 19 BODIES. THEY DO NOT HAVE THE NAMES OF THE 19, TO PASS TO ISRAEL. SEVENTEEN OF THEM ARE FROM OCTOBER AND TWO FROM AFTER THE WAR. SHAFIR SAID ISRAEL WOULD RECEIVE THE 19 BODIES, CHECK THEIR IDENTITIES, AND INFORM SYRIANS OF THE TWO THAT ARE MISSING. TAYYARA INSISTED SYRIANS HAVE NO MORE
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ISRAELI BODIES. SIILASVUO SUMMARIZED BY GIVING HIS UNDERSTANDING THAT SYRIANS AGREE ON THE PRINCIPLE OF THE EXCHANGE OF BODIES AND WILL SUGGEST THE DATE TOMORROW.

11. SIILASVUO MOVED TO ISRAELI SUGGESTION FOR REMOVAL OF WRECKED VEHICLES IN NO-MAN'S-LAND. ISRAELIS SUGGESTED REMOVAL TAKE PLACE OVER THREE DAYS JUNE 3-5. OPERATION TO BE UNDER SUPERVISION OF UN WITH ASSISTANCE OF LIAISON OFFICERS FROM BOTH PARTIES, COORDINATED WITH LOCAL

COMMANDERS ON BOTH SIDES. THEY PROVIDED A MAP WHICH INDICATED VEHICLES WERE IN THREE LOCATIONS AND CONSISTED OF TWO TANKS AND SEVEN OTHER MILITARY VEHICLES.

12. IN REPLY TO AN ISRAELI SUGGESTION, PUT INTO A DIRECT QUESTION BY SIILASVUO, TAYYARA SAID SYRIANS HAVE NO SUCH VEHICLES THAT THEY WANT RETRIEVED. TAYYARA SUGGESTED THAT WAS A MINOR QUESTION WHICH COULD BE DISCUSSED AFTER DISENGAGEMENT COMPLETED. SHAFIR INSISTED IT IS NOT POSSIBLE TO ACCOMPLISH ONCE FORCES HAVE BEEN SEPARATED, AT LEAST IN TWO OF THE THREE LOCATIONS SHOWN ON THE MAP. HE POINTED OUT MUTUAL EXCHANGE OF WRECKED VEHICLES HAD TAKEN PLACE IN SINAI. EGYPTIAN BRIG GEN MAGHDOUB (WHO WAS SITTING WITH THE SYRIAN DELEGATION) NOTED THAT IN SINAI RETRIEVAL OF VEHICLES WAS DONE AFTER DISENGAGEMENT TOOK PLACE. SHAFIR COUNTERED THAT IN THE GOLAN THIS IS POSSIBLE ONLY PRIOR TO DISENGAGEMENT. AS TAYYARA CONTINUED TO SHOW RELUCTANCE, SHAFIR ASKED IF THE ANSWER WAS NEGATIVE.

12. SIILASVUO INTERJECTED THAT HE UNDERSTOOD SYRIAN DOES NO AGREE TO REMOVAL ON THE SUGGESTED DATES. WOULD SYRIAN SUGGEST OTHER DATES? AS TAYYARA INDICATED CONTINUING OPPOSITION, SHAFIR SAID ISRAELI CONCERN WENT BEYOND THE VEHICLES. AS GEN MAGHDOUB KNOWS WELL, ISRAELIS ARE CONCERNED ABOUT PARTS OF BODIES THAT MAY BE IN THEM, ESPECIALLY THE TANKS. ISRAEL WOULD LIKE THEIR RETURN FOR RELIGIOUS REASONS.

13. TAYYARA SAID SYRIANS PROMISE TO RETURN ANY DEAD BODIES THEY FIND IN SUCH VEHICLES. SHAFIR INSISTED THAT THIS UNLIKELY TO BE PRACTICAL AND CONCERNS PARTS OF BODIES AS WELL AS WHOLE ONES. SIILASVUO INTERJECTED THAT, KNOWING
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THE GREAT IMPORTANCE ISRAEL ATTACHES TO HUMAN BODIES, HE SUGGESTED SYRIAN DELEGATION GIVE CONSIDERATION TO THE QUESTION OVERNIGHT AND PROVIDE AN ANSWER TOMORROW. TAYYARA AGREED.

14. ALL SUBJECTS ON AGENDA FOR THE DAY HAVING BEEN DISCUSSED, SIILASVUO SAID HE HAD A QUESTION FOR BOTH PARTIES. SINCE DISENGAGEMENT PLAN WILL REQUIRE UNDOF TO COME TO THE AREA SOON AND BEGIN TAKING UP POSITIONS ON JUNE 6, DO THE PARTIES HAVE ANY OBJECTION IN PRINCIPLE TO A START IN THE MOVEMENT OF UNDOF TOWARD THE AREA? HE EXPLAINED THAT HE HAD IN MIND GIVING THE ALERT PERHAPS TOMORROW AND TROOPS BEGINNING TO MOVE PERHAPS 24 HOURS LATER. SYRIAN SIDE HAD NO OBJECTION. ISRAELI SIDE HAD NO OBJECTION IN PRINCIPLE, BUT ASKED TO SEE PLANS AND TIMETABLE FOR THE MOVEMENT.

15. SIILASVUO NOTED TALKS ARE ALSO TAKING PLACE IN THE FIELD. HE WILL BE SEEING SYG WALDHEIM WHEN LATTER VISITS GENEVA TOMORROW. HE WOUL HOPE THAT BY MONDAY AT THE LATEST HE COULD PROVIDE A PLAN ON THE MOVEMENT OF TROOPS. THE IDEA, HE ADDED, IS TO MOVE RECONNAISSANCE AND ADVANCE PARTIES BY AIR. MAIN BULK OF FORCE WOULD MOVE BY ROAD, THROUGH ISRAEL.

16. FINAL SUBJECT DISCUSSED WAS WHAT TO SAY TO THE PRESS AFTER THIS MEETING. SIILASVUO READ A BRIEF STATEMENT DRAFTED BY HIS ASSISTANT, MR JONAH. IT STATED SIMPLY THAT MILITARY WORKING GROUP HAD DISCUSSED A NUMBER OF QUESTIONS REGARDING THE SEPARATION OF FORCES IN THE AREA. IT WOULD BE DISCUSSING MORE DETAILS LATER, AND WOULD MEET AGAIN TOMORROW MORNING AT 10:30.

17. SHAFIR PROPOSED THAT, SINCE THE PARTIES HAD AGREED ON IT, THE GENERAL TIMETABLE FOR DISENGAGEMENT BE GIVEN TO THE PRESS. TAYYARA DISAGREED. THERE WAS CONSIDERABLE DISCUSSION AND A NUMBER OF ALTERNATIVES WERE THROWN OUT. TAYYARA STUCK BY FORMULATION WHICH WOULD FOLLOW FORMAT OF THE ORIGINAL AGREEMENT, I.E. THAT DISENGAGEMENT WILL BEGIN WITHIN 24 HOURS AFTER WORKING GROUP COMPLETES ITS WORK. HE WOULD NOT BE BUDGED FROM THAT POSITION. SIILASVUO TURNED TO
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SHAFIR, WHO BROKE INTO LAUGHTER AND COMMENTED THAT ANY STATEMENT TO THE PRESS HAD TO BE BY COMMON CONSENT OF BOTH PARTIES. SINCE THE OTHER PARTY HAD NOT AGREED TO HIS PROPOSAL, SIILASVUO SHOULD NOT ASK HIM WHAT TO DO. THIS BROUGHT LAUGHTER AND A RELEASE OF TENSION FROM SYRIAN-EGYPTIAN DELEGATION AS WELL AS UN OFFICIALS. SIILASVUO THEN SUGGESTED THAT POSSIBILITY OF GIVING THE GENERAL TIMETABLE AND SIMILAR DETAILS TO THE PRESS BE RECONSIDERED TOMORROW OR EVEN AFTER TOMORROW, ONCE THE SYRIAN SIDE HAS HAD A CHANCE TO CONSIDER THE ISRAELI PROPOSED TIMETABLE AND MAP OVERNIGHT.ABRAMS

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